

Short Term Mission Trip Expands to New Chapter in Life

Jesse Walters, a retired utility supervisor, had a great plan. For the short term mission trip his church planned for Ghana, why not bring some evangelism material? He surfed the internet and found The God's Story Project. He liked the idea of a chronological presentation of scripture, so he emailed them asking if they had any pictures that could enrich the church's ministry in the villages.

Because of the email overload at God's Story office, 6 months went by before he received a reply. Jesse immediately phoned the office. "I am happy you responded, but I am leaving in 3 weeks!" Jesse learned at this late date that people could partner to get the 80-minute Bible video *God's Story: From Creation to Eternity*, translated and produced, but the process usually took a minimum of a year to complete. He needed the Dangbani for the Fante village they were going to visit, so, Jesse decided to bring the translation material to Ghana to at least get the project started.

Two days later, a couple stopped by the Walters' house.

"I see you have your house for sale."

"I am leaving for church soon, but you can look around if you are quick."

"Oh, you are a Christian. So are we."

"Sorry for the disarray, I am leaving for Africa in 3 weeks."

"Oh? Where?"

"Ghana."

"Why?"

"I am going to the Fante people."

"We are Fante!"

Jesse shared his dream, to translate *God's Story* into Dangbani, at which time the couple explained, "Dangbani is our mother tongue!"

Jesse asked for their help. They responded, "We are moving from New York to Georgia and we

have 3 weeks before we start our jobs.”

Three weeks later, on the flight to Ghana, Jesse had in his hands the script of *God's Story* in Dangbani! So, in village after village, a local pastor read the Dagbani script while with the sound off

od's Story

played. The response Jesse saw prompted him to complete this language and later, many, many more for Ghana.

Jesse leaned how to orchestrate and record new languages. Over the next four years, by using his retirement time and money (and donations as God provided), Jesse made 10 trips to Ghana. 49 new language versions of *God's Story* for Ghana were birthed! “My target is all 63 indigenous languages of Ghana.” On added trips, by request of The God's Story Project, Jesse visited the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda where teams representing 35 languages of those countries were trained how to translate God's Story into their mother tongues.

Stories abound of people being saved who never before had heard of Jesus. They find salvation and are growing in their faith just from hearing this Bible overview in their mother tongues.

When any discussion arises of the work this retired man has accomplished or the multiplied thousands who are coming to Jesus or being disciplined through the use of *God's Story* in Ghana, Jesse just responds . . . “By God's grace and for His glory.”

More on [Short Term Mission Trips](#) ☐ ☐ ☐ [Brochure on Short Term Mission Trips](#)

[Practical Theology](#)

Thanks so much for leading the workshop in Arizona. You've given me a tool which I anticipate utilizing in many contexts, particularly in Colombia.

STS bridged the gap between my Bible college education and real-life communication on the mission field.

I hope that the Lord will open the door for you to take STS back to Central Asia one day!

On His Knees

[This came from one of our STS instructors in Africa. The encounter occurred during a large mission conference in Nigeria. Missions, Africans going cross-cultural to reach other Africans.]

I am currently very emotional coz for the first time a man literally cried to me "in tears on knees" asking for STS training. He watched the demonstration story I had done. He came to me afterwards and said. "This is for my people in Cameroon. Only me and God know how long I've wanted this for my country and how many times I've been turned down or been given the wrong form of it by those who came to help us.

"Please come to Cameroon," he begged!!! So we are making a date before tomorrow.

My Change in Mindset

[Testimony comes from an OMF church planter in North Thailand who was exposed to STS a couple of years ago, but finally had the chance to take the full five day STS. Just two days after

the course was over he sent this email.]

In the past I used a Thai story set of around 10 stories that was developed by a missionary.

What I found though was that it was very difficult for me to learn the stories because they were crafted stories and they tended to be longer than the ones use"d in STS. I spent several weeks trying to memorize the 1st story and did an o.k job, but after that I ended up reading the stories to the Thai guy I was telling a story to each week because I just couldn't learn the stories from memory.

With STS the stories are shorter and I've been taught a workable method for learning the stories. In the last week I've pretty much learned the "Two men who went to the temple to pray" story (Luke 18:9-14) in Thai and intend to start using this story with Thais.

My change in mindset has come because last weeks' STS training made me realize that I could learn the Bible stories relatively quickly and without too much effort. After using it a couple of times, I could see people responding positively to them as well.

Another key was the retelling of the story element in STS (tell, volunteer, lead through). I think this helps the hearer know the story much better and gets them involved. Previously I'd only be telling/reading the story once with the person.

Thirdly, using actions while learning the story helped me learn the story much more quickly and also made the story more interesting for the people listening.

Fourthly, I never thought of myself as a natural story teller and I'm introverted. However, the seminar helped me to see that though I may not be naturally gifted, with practice I could tell stories to a reasonable extent.

All in all, my confidence in learning the stories and telling has greatly increased and I've told more stories since coming back to Lampang in the last 2 days than I have in the last month. I'm using every opportunity I can to tell a story (my wife heard the resurrection story on the night I returned, my English class the two prayers story the next morning, my Thai friend the two prayers story at the golf driving range that afternoon, this morning the kids got the two prayers story for our family devotion and the resurrection story just before bed).

I'm just thinking, *why I didn't use STS after your original introduction at the OMF conference 2 years ago, or after your seminar here in Lampang?* It wasn't that I didn't believe in STS, I think I just didn't have enough personal experience in it which last weeks' workshop gave.

Blessings, Rich Cho
Australia - OMF International

Four Stories From Bicol, Philippines

(The missionary who sent us these reports from Bicol attended a workshop in the States, hosted a workshop in Bicol and then served as staff at one more STS workshop.)

1. “A missionary struggled for years to prepare his sermons. That changed after learning the STS method. He learned how to fill his sermons with truths and applications.

“He now uses the STS method for evangelistic Bible studies, when discipling new believers, during trainings, and in house church worship.”

2. “Pastor Tony put people to sleep when he spoke. After attending an STS training, he changed his way of preaching.

“On Monday, he chooses a Bible story and takes time every day to learn the story and meditate on it's truths and applications. Then on the week-end, he hikes from place to place, using the same story in every place.

“The Bible story sometimes last 2 hours as people discuss the story.

“Now when Pastor Tony speaks, everyone listens.

1. “The second time Pastor Tony attended an STS training, he brought some men and women from these places, who had become believers. At that training, we helped him train his people to use STS.

“Some of them are also hiking to different places, telling Bible stories and discussing them with others.”

“This is how a tribal couple uses STS. The man cannot read, but his wife can. She reads the story to him and he retells it. They do this over and over until he can tell the story. Then when their extended family gathers for worship, he tells the story and asks questions to lead the family to discover its truths and apply it in their lives.

“This couple has also gone to a second place. Last time the group met, they baptized 5 new believers.”

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